

1 Thessalonians 3:1-8 - APPOINTED TO AFFLICTION.

I. (1-5) No one should be shaken.

In the previous chapter Paul explained how much he wanted to be with the Thessalonians during their time of trial. However, since Paul could not be with the Thessalonians himself, he did the next best thing. He wrote and sent **Timothy** to them, remaining by himself in Athens.

- **To establish and encourage them concerning their faith:** Paul wanted Timothy to do two things – to **establish and encourage** the Thessalonians.

To make firm, give strength and courage. Strength and courage were necessary so as to keep them in the path of faith; it's possible to be tempted away (crumble) b's of trials and tribulation.

“Without a good understanding of the truth concerning the place of suffering in the life of the believer, we are in great danger of being **shaken** in our faith.”

John 16:33 - “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Act 20:1-2 - After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia. Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece.

We can easily mistake afflictions for God's anger at us and our sin.

Philippians 1:29 - For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

In Jesus' parable of the soils (**Matthew 13:1-23**), He described the way that some fall away when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word –the Christian faith will be attacked from many angles (the devil, the world and within).

“**Pain**, when it is ongoing and uncontrolled, has a detrimental, deteriorative **effect** on virtually every aspect of a patient's life. It produces anxiety and emotional distress; undermines well-being; interferes with functional capacity; and hinders the ability to fulfill family, social, and vocational roles.”

“Pain often causes recognizable physiological and behavioral changes...”

II. (3:6-8) Comfort in all affliction.

When Timothy returned from his visit to the Thessalonians, he brought **good news**. The Thessalonians were doing well in **faith and love**, and Paul helped them to do even better with this letter he wrote. The news brought comfort, health and peace to Paul.

“Pain is not good in itself. What is good in any painful experience is, for the sufferer, his submission to the will of God, and, for the spectators, the compassion aroused and the acts of mercy to which it leads.” C.S. Lewis.

Psalm 34:19 - Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 - For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us,

James 1:2-3 - My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

1 Peter 5:10 - But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.